

**SUMMARY OF THE
MEMBERSHIP AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 29, 1999**

The Membership and Outreach Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met on Tuesday, June 29, 1999, at 8:30 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) as part of the Fifth NELAC Annual Meeting in Saratoga Springs, NY. The meeting was led by its chair, Dr. Irene E. Ronning of the Oregon Public Health Laboratory. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the NELAC Website, Presentation Materials, NELAC Accreditation of Small Laboratories, and the NELAC Historian's activities.*

INTRODUCTION AND COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Committee members introduced themselves. Two members, Ms. Lea Ekman and Ms. Rhonda Carter were unable to attend.

Minutes from 4/28/99 Teleconference

Dr. Ronning requested a motion to accept the 4/28/99 teleconference minutes that were prepared by Mr. Don Zahniser. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved that the minutes be accepted as written.

Correspondence to Committee

Dr. Ronning read a message forwarded from Jeanne Mourrain of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), which commended the committee's work on the NELAC Website.

A letter, written by J. Wilson Hersey of Lancaster Laboratories on behalf of the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB), was received by the committee. This letter requested the committee's assistance in dissemination of information to small laboratories to assist in their obtaining NELAC accreditation and was discussed later.

JOURNALS AND WEBSITES

A list of journals that would be likely candidates for NELAC announcements was handed out to the audience. The Annual Meeting was announced at various Websites on this list. This list will be a good tool to announce the Fifth NELAC Interim Meeting.

NELAC Website

The NELAC Website belongs to the USEPA and all material recommended for placement on it must go through an approval process. Therefore, publications on the Website may not be as rapid as many would like. Due to lack of a budget, the committee must use the Website as the main vehicle by which it informs people about NELAC.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) that have been received from the committees and approved by the NELAC Board of Directors and the USEPA will be posted on the NELAC Website. The Membership and Outreach Committee will develop FAQs that address general questions. The committee wants to add a FAQ that lists which States have been approved by NELAP.

The suggestion was made to add a NELAC Calendar to the Website which would provide an annual NELAC life cycle, a history of NELAC activities, teleconference schedules, and meeting schedules, etc. Other suggested additions included a state representative roster, and a glossary of terms.

Presentation Materials on NELAC Website

Presentation materials will be recommended for placement on the NELAC Website to provide a means to disseminate information about NELAC. Diana Baldi formatted donated presentations by removing logos, and specific examples.

Two example PowerPoint slide show presentations concerning small laboratory issues and the NELAC Standards were reviewed by the committee for word/content changes. These presentations should be considered drafts because issues raised in them will be resolved at this meeting. The committee exhibited the third presentation about the History and Structure of NELAC while discussing the role of the NELAC Historian.

The committee wants to provide a link on the NELAC Website to a PowerPoint reader in the event people need to download this file and PowerPoint is unavailable. The committee also wants to provide instructions to retrieve PowerPoint presentations as overheads for those prospective speakers who will not have the technology to make PowerPoint presentations.

It was recommended that the presenter should add the Website address to the presentation so the audience will know where they can go to obtain the NELAC Standards

It was recommended that any reference to ISO 25 be changed to ISO 17025 due to the imminent changes in those Standards. It was also proposed that, for clarity, the NELAC section name (as well as the number) should be used when referencing the NELAC Standard that is being revised.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COMMITTEES

The committee handed out a list of the NELAC Membership and Outreach Committee Membership Roster to the audience.

On behalf of the committee, Dr. Ronning will present a proposal to the NELAC Board of Directors for other committees to provide a liaison member from each committee to clarify any questions that may arise in these meetings. It is difficult for the Membership and Outreach Committee to stay current on all issues in all committees.

NELAC HISTORIAN

Participants reviewed and noted the needed modifications to the NELAC History and Structure slide show. Mr. Zahniser, the NELAC Historian, described his recent activities. He pointed out that there have been people who have been involved in NELAC since the beginning who are rotating off committees or retiring from their public careers. The role of historian was instituted to “capture” decisions that were made in the past. He has made an outline of the NELAC timeline. The majority of background information obtained thus far is from the USEPA point of view. More background information needs to be obtained on the States’, commercial laboratories’, Federal agencies’, and industries’ reasons for wanting an accreditation program. The information that is gathered will be incorporated into a document and submitted for posting on the NELAC Website.

OTHER ISSUES

Small Laboratories

The letter from ELAB focused on how to assist small laboratories in becoming NELAC accredited. The committee will address the small laboratory issue by (1) requesting that State representatives send the information to small laboratories, (2) providing educational information on the NELAC Website, and (3) requesting that the USEPA add necessary information to proficiency testing (PT) materials.

Although the committee cannot write sample quality assurance (QA) plans and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for small laboratories, the committee may develop guidance documents.

It was also suggested that PT providers be contacted and requested to place a NELAC brochure in with the PT information they send to the laboratories.

Nomination Forms for Committee Members

The handling of completed nomination forms has been transferred to the USEPA as it has been determined that this paperwork is too cumbersome for the committee. The USEPA will provide lists of prospective committee members to committee chairs.

ACTION ITEMS
MEMBERSHIP AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING
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Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed
1.	Dr. Ronning will update presentation materials based on the Annual Meeting results and recommend posting these on the NELAC Website.	
2.	Mike Ciolek will put a PowerPoint Reader on the NELAC Website to accommodate downloading presentations when PowerPoint is unavailable.	
3.	The Membership and Outreach Committee will have to write FAQs to address general questions that have been raised. The committee will add a FAQ which lists the States have been NELAC accredited.	
4.	Mr. Zahniser will compile information on NELAC's history and capture the decisions that have been made in the past. This compilation will be generated into a report which will be posted on the NELAC.	
5.	The committee will assist small laboratories in obtaining NELAC accreditation by requesting that state representatives send the information to the small laboratories, providing educational information on the NELAC Website, and requesting the USEPA addition of necessary information to PT materials.	
6.	Dr. Ronning will contact PT providers and request that they include a NELAC brochure in their informational material to laboratories.	

**PARTICIPANTS
MEMBERSHIP AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 29, 1999**

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